



INTRODUCTION

Organizations of many kinds rely on grant funding to carry out their missions. Whether a potential grantee is applying to receive funds made available on a formula basis or is competing against other organizations for assistance, the applicant's skill at navigating the application process contributes substantially to their success. Perhaps no part of this process is more critical than the development of the Statement of Work, or SOW. Especially in the case of competitive grant programs, grantors want to know not only what the applicant wishes to accomplish using the funds, but also that the applicant truly understands how to plan and carry out the actions needed to achieve their objective.

This document provides guidance on developing an SOW as part of an application for mitigation planning grant funds under the competitive Pre-Disaster Mitigation program (PDM-C), Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program. It describes the types of information that an applicant or sub-applicant (henceforth referred to as "applicant") should include in their SOW to ensure that it is of sufficient scope and detail for the application to be appropriately reviewed and, if applicable, scored. The elements discussed are examples of items to be included in the SOW; they are not required to be included as written here. Additionally, the elements may be used individually to request funding for development of specific parts of a plan, or they may be used in combination to create a SOW covering the entire planning process.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

First and foremost, a Statement of Work is an initial road map for how the applicant proposes to make use of grant funds to achieve their objective. It is also the applicant's chance – probably their *only* chance – to demonstrate to the grantor their ability to use the grantor's money effectively and appropriately. For this reason, it is important to ensure that the SOW clearly states what is to be accomplished and establishes how, by whom, where, and when it will be done.

SOWs are generally narrative in nature. While there is no universally applicable format for SOWs, they generally comprise an introduction; a list of tasks, actions, and/or deliverables; and a timetable. The introduction should include an overview of the proposed action and a background statement that establishes the context in which the funded action will be carried out, e.g., how the proposed action meets program objectives and supports the goals established in the applicant's strategic plans. This should be followed by a description of the outcomes and/or deliverables at a level of detail that is sufficient to justify the funds requested; to clearly identify the discrete tasks, procurements, and other actions that will be undertaken; and to establish metrics for performance. This discussion may address factors such as the type of contract to be used, the personnel qualifications needed for various roles, whether work is to be performed at a contractor's office or on-site, and the standards against which the deliverable will be measured. Finally, the SOW should include a set of milestones that includes the estimated start date, critical interim dates, and the anticipated completion date. This schedule can be described in different ways, such as in terms of absolute calendar dates or as a timeline that begins counting days, weeks, or months starting with the date of award.

DEVELOPING A MITIGATION PLANNING GRANT SOW

The mitigation planning grant application Statement of Work should describe the development of a multi-hazard mitigation plan that complies with FEMA's regulatory requirements. As described above, a mitigation planning SOW should consist of two main elements, in this case a description of the planning process and a timeline for plan development. Both of these sections should clearly demonstrate the applicant's familiarity with the applicable regulatory requirements and the available technical and programmatic guidance.

The SOW should begin with a short profile of the community that includes background information such as demographic data, recent mitigation activities, and population at risk. It should also state whether the proposed planning activity will result in an initial plan or in an update or enhancement to an existing plan; if the latter, the reason(s) for the update (e.g., acquisition of better data, recent disaster activity, changes in local growth and development trends) should be provided.

In a planning grant SOW, the description of the plan development process will typically comprise several sub-elements that, when completed, meet the applicable requirements promulgated in 44 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 201. These regulatory planning requirements are described in detail in FEMA's March 2003 publication *Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance Under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000* (available online at http://www.fema.gov/fima/planning_toc4.shtml). Additionally, the overall planning process is described in FEMA's series of Mitigation Planning How-To guides, which are available at <http://www.fema.gov/fima/planhowto.shtml>. The SOW should thoroughly document each of these steps, including not just what will be done, but also who will be responsible for the completion of each step (e.g., contract personnel or in-house staff), and who else will be involved in the process. It should also explain how the public and other interested jurisdictions, agencies, and organizations will be involved throughout (e.g., workshops, community outreach).

The work schedule should indicate the anticipated timeline for these steps and should allow sufficient time for State and FEMA review, preparation of any required revisions, subsequent reviews, formal plan adoption, and FEMA approval. While it is useful to include schedule information in the narrative description of each step of the process, the SOW should also include a timeline, table, or other summary display of the overall plan development timeline.

Sample Outline and Content for a Planning SOW

1. **Planning process.** The SOW should describe the overall process that will be used to develop the plan or section(s) thereof. This element should include the following information:
 - What – establishment of specific actions to be performed (e.g., hold public meetings and workshops to develop plan goals and objectives; solicit input regarding the feasibility of potential mitigation measures for each hazard and the prioritization of mitigation projects; review the final draft of the plan);
 - Who – identification of who will be involved in the planning process and what function(s) each will perform (e.g., who has overall responsibility for developing the plan? what tasks will be assigned to contractors? how will voluntary organizations support the planning effort?);
 - How – the means by which each action will be accomplished (e.g., meetings, workshops, research, document reviews, public input and comment);
 - When – the timeframe for completion (e.g., starting and completion milestones for each task, identified as number of calendar days after date of award); and
 - In the case of a multi-jurisdictional plan, a discussion of how each jurisdiction will participate in the planning process.

2. **Risk assessment.** The SOW should describe how the risk assessment component of the plan will be developed so as to provide sufficient information to enable the applicant to identify and prioritize appropriate mitigation actions. As described in FEMA Publication 386-2, *Understanding Your Risks*, the risk assessment process has four phases:

- identifying hazards to determine which phenomena may impact the planning area;
- profiling the relevant hazards to understand their potential consequences;
- identifying assets such as structures, functions, and populations that are subject to losses or damage by the identified hazards; and
- estimating the potential losses that can result from occurrences of each type of hazard.

Hazard Identification and Profiling: The SOW should specify how the applicant intends to obtain information and data on the hazards to which the planning area is susceptible, describing what data is already available – if any – and how this information will be updated and/or augmented as part of the grant work. If possible, the SOW should identify the natural hazards that the jurisdiction will address in the plan, and if any hazards present an obvious threat but will not be covered in the plan, the SOW should explain why. Mapping of hazard areas should also be addressed if applicable, because while maps are not required by FEMA to be included in multi-hazard mitigation plans, their use supports planners' decision making. FEMA recognizes that the purpose of the hazard identification process is to discover this type of information and that the applicant may make final decisions regarding treatment of certain hazards only after the risk assessment is underway or completed. FEMA recommends that the SOW address this contingency. Multi-jurisdictional plans should include identification both of hazards that could affect the entire planning area as well as those that are specific to individual participating jurisdictions.

Vulnerability Assessment: The SOW should discuss specifically how the applicant intends to identify the types and numbers of structures, functions, and populations that are subject to losses or damage by the identified hazards. For example, it should contain a description of the intended methods and locations for conducting research and obtaining data (e.g., windshield surveys, state or regional databases, universities, etc.) and an identification of who will perform the research. The SOW should also present the methodology by which it intends to determine vulnerability of structures and calculate losses, and it should identify who will be responsible for this activity. If maps will be used in the plan to depict elements of vulnerability, the SOW should include a description of how the data will be integrated onto these maps and of the methodology for the mapping (e.g., use of acetate and paper maps or contracting for GIS support). These discussions should include a review of any data that is already available (e.g., critical facilities inventory, land use plans and development regulations) and a description of how the applicant will update and/or augment this information as part of the grant work. For multi-jurisdictional plans, the SOW should provide this information in such a way that each participating community is addressed.

3. **Hazard mitigation strategy.** The hazard mitigation strategy provides the jurisdiction's blueprint for reducing the potential losses identified in the risk assessment, and the SOW should contain a description of the process by which the strategy will be developed and an identification of the participants in that process. In particular, the SOW should describe the development of goals and objectives that focus on reducing the risks from the identified natural hazards as well as the process by which a comprehensive range of mitigation actions will be identified, analyzed, and prioritized. For example, the SOW should describe how the community intends to develop a consensus on the goals and objectives of the plan and on the project priorities (e.g., via surveys, public meetings, and workshops). For multi-jurisdictional plans, each participating jurisdiction must have a local mitigation strategy specific to its exposure as described in the risk assessment.
4. **Additional State requirements (local plans only).** Local jurisdictions should identify and include in the SOW how any additional requirements set by the State emergency management agency will be addressed.

5. **Writing the plan document.** The SOW should address who will write the plan document and whether this will be accomplished using a contractor. It should specify all steps to be taken from initial draft to final publication and should describe how the document will be reviewed by the community, the State, and the FEMA Regional Office. This includes a description of the intended number of drafts to be produced based on the anticipated process of reviews and revisions. The SOW should allow time for these reviews, as well as for revisions and re-submission if necessary, into the work schedule. Experience has shown that it may be helpful to obtain a courtesy review by the appropriate FEMA Regional Office prior to formal adoption so that any necessary revisions can be made prior to final executive review.
6. **Plan adoption and approval.** The SOW should describe the process by which the applicant will document that the plan has been formally adopted by the governing body of the jurisdiction (or of each jurisdiction requesting approval, if the plan is multi-jurisdictional). For example, local plans will be submitted to the State emergency management agency for review, then forwarded to the FEMA Regional Office for final review and approval, while State plans will be submitted to FEMA Regional Office for review and final approval; when a plan has been determined to meet all applicable requirements, FEMA considers it “approvable pending adoption,” at which point the jurisdiction can formally adopt the plan with the assurance that FEMA will approve it as soon as documentation of adoption is provided.
7. **Sample work schedule.**

Task	Calendar days from Award		Responsible Party
	Start	Complete	
Appoint a planning team	0	45	In-house
Risk assessment – hazard identification & profiling	30	120	Contract w/ Acme Plan Co.
Risk assessment – asset identification and loss estimation	90	290	In-house
Develop mitigation strategy	200	300	In-house
Complete draft plan	300	700	In-house
Review/revision of draft plan	730	830	State EMA / FEMA / In-house
Plan adoption	850	1000	In-house
Plan to FEMA for approval	1005	1095	FEMA
Total Duration	1095		

CONCLUSION

FEMA has consistently emphasized the importance of the planning process in the development of a meaningful multi-hazard mitigation plan. This is because it is only through this process that a jurisdiction can develop the breadth and depth of knowledge necessary to take effective action to reduce its risks. So while there are common elements that should be addressed in nearly every planning grant Statement of Work, and although the way an applicant crafts their application for planning funds should reflect their understanding of – and commitment to – this general process, FEMA recognizes that every community's needs are different. We encourage you to recognize and highlight the unique requirements and capabilities that set your jurisdiction apart, and we wish you success as you work toward the goal of a sustainable community.